

ON 29 APRIL AT APPROXIMATELY 1000 I WAS EVACUATED FROM ROOFTOP AT [87 NGUYEN DINH CHIEU] BY AN AIR AMERICA HELICOPTER [PILOTED BY CAPTAIN DAVID KENDALL AND FRANK STERGAR]

UPON ARRIVING AT THE AIR AMERICA COMPOUND I CHECKED IN AND INSPECTED MY ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT [N7770B], A LONG RANGE VOLPAR. AFTER PLACING THE NECESSARY EQUIPMENT ABOARD THE AIRCRAFT I AIDED IN RAMP SECURITY FOR AWHILE. THERE WAS NO MILITARY SECURITY ON HAND.

AFTER ALL OTHER FIXED WING AIRCRAFT DEPARTED I WAS ALONE ON THE RAMP. THERE WERE [2 VOLPARS] AND ONE [PORTER] FLYABLE REMAINING. I REMAINED FROM 45 TO 60 MINUTES LONGER HOPING MORE FLIGHT CREWS WOULD SHOW UP. TO PASS THE TIME I LOADED A FEW PIECES OF ABANDONED GEAR AND LUGGAGE FROM THE OFFICE AND RAMP. I MORE THAN IMPLIED TO THE CROWD OF VIETNAMESE (MOSTLY MILITARY) THAT THEY COULD NOT GET ABOARD. THE TIGER CIRCUIT RADIO IN TRAFFIC WAS STILL OPERATING AND OVER THIS RADIO INFORMED [CAPT. WINSTON, CHIEF PILOT] THAT THE RAMP WAS BECOMING DIFFICULT TO HOLD ALONE BECAUSE OF THE MOB. [CAPT. WINSTON] ADVISED ME TO LEAVE SINCE IT WAS EXTREMELY DOUBTFUL THAT ANY OTHER CREW MEMBERS OR COMPANY PERSONNEL COULD MAKE IT TO OUR RAMP.

LUCKILY DURING STARTING A FEW MORE EXPLOSIONS RATTLED THE RAMP AND MOST OF THE MOB RAN BACK INTO OUR PASSENGER TERMINAL.

A VNAF LT., WHO HAD HELPED ME WITH THE CHOCKS, GAVE ME A "THUMBS UP" AND I TAXIED OUT ALONE. I GAVE HIM THE TOYOTA AUTO WHICH I HAD BEEN SHUTTLING ACROSS THE RAMP WITH.

[TAN SON NHUT TOWER] WAS ABANDONED. AIRCRAFT ON THE VNAF LINE WERE BURNING AND EXPLODING AMIDST THE INCOMING ROUND AND THERE WERE BODIES, VEHICLES, ARTILLERY AND ROCKET DEBRIS ON

VNAF AND INTERNATIONAL PASSENGER RAMP. I TOOK OFF WITHOUT HESITATION. THE AIRCRAFT RECEIVED ONE HIT SHORTLY AFTER TAKEOFF. DURING THE TAKEOFF ROLL AND CLIMB I COULD NOT HELP BUT ADMIRE THE EFFICIENT JOB THE ENEMY HAD PERFORMED ON THE VNAF REVETMENTS. THEY MUST HAVE "GRIDDED IT" MONTHS AGO. THE TIME WAS APPROXIMATELY 1230 LOCAL.

I HAD PLANNED TO STICK AROUND AND RADIO RELAY BUT [CAPT. ED ADAMS] WAS AIRBORNE PREVIOUSLY AND PERFORMING THIS FUNCTION IN A [C-46]

ALTERNATE [CON SON ISLAND] WAS CONSIDERED BUT WAS INFORMED THAT IT WAS EXTREMELY CONGESTED. [HONG KONG] WAS THEN MY DECLARED DESTINATION SO SKIRTED [THE COAST OF VIETNAM AT 13,500 FT.] UNTIL A VISUAL SIGHTING OF [QUI NHON] ALLOWED ME TO SET A [D.R. COURSE FOR NORTH REEF] A [SING AIR JET] RELAYED MY FLIGHT CLEARANCE REQUEST TO [HONG KONG]. GOT A VISUAL CONTACT ON [NORTH REEF ON ETA] AND ABOUT 30 MINUTES LATER PICKED UP [HKG] ON THE ADF TEN MORE MINUTES LATER ESTABLISHED VOICE CONTACT WITH [HONG KONG RADIO AND LATER WITH CONTROL] I WAS CLEARED TO [CHARLIE CHARLIE] AND THENCE BY RADAR VECTORS TO [KAI TAK AIRPORT]

[CAPT. STEVE SADLER] WAS IN CUSTOMS WHEN I ARRIVED AND AFTER CLEARING WE WERE HIT BY A BARAGE OF FLOODLIGHTS, TV CAMERAS AND REPORTERS. I FELT IT BEST TO AT LEAST ANSWER A FEW QUESTIONS, WHICH I DID. ONE GOOD THING CAME OF THAT: MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS KNEW PRACTICALLY IMMEDIATELY THAT I HAD MADE IT OUT. I THEN WENT DOWNTOWN, CHECKED INTO A HOTEL, BATHED AND BEFORE A LATE SUPPER, HAD ABOUT 4 MARTINI'S (MAYBE EVEN 5).

IN CLOSING I WISH TO COMMEND THE CHIEF PILOT, [ROTARY WING]
AND HIS BOYS, FOR THEIR TRULY MAGNIFICENT PERFORMANCE DURING
THE SAIGON EVACUATION.

IT WAS TIME TO LEAVE ANYWAY, AS I WAS DUE IN COURT THAT
AFTERNOON.

[CAPTAIN K. F. HERRINGTON]
AIR AMERICA, INC.